6/14/10: Draft Two

Personal Narrative Piece

Reaching Sam

Sam is my eight year old son. He is emotionally quiet. I’m not sure how or when he learned to tuck his emotions deep inside his innermost pocket, but he did. If I ask him how his day was, his answer is always in his eyes. If they are gazing down, his day wasn’t a good one. Maybe he would’ve liked more cheese on his burger at lunch, or perhaps three older boys bullied him on the school bus. But I’ll never know. He’ll never tell.

Jim insists on asking questions one after another and I watch as Sam searches for the response that will make his Dad stop. If the answer prompts another, deeper question, Sam will quickly retract his answer and replace it with another that will hopefully require less follow up.

Today, Darth Vader and Obi Won were the key. He was playing Star Wars and I joined in quietly battling Jedi against clone troopers. Sam suddenly let the words out of a choked throat, “I traded my baseball silly band for a turtle one, and now I want it back.”He knows there is no trading and he knows I won’t jump in to reverse the trade, but he shares it anyway. Now it’s out there no longer bouncing around in his mind.

I give him a hug and the floodgates open. I know he’s just in second grade, but what will I do when he’s not into Star Wars anymore?